

Adai

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A hearty thick pancake, this is a nutritious blend of lentils and rice.

By Ashok Vasudevan

Serves 6 | Prep time: 3 hours | Cook time: 30 minutes



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INGREDIENTS :

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1 cup parboiled rice (substitute with regular white, if needed)



- 1/2 cup split chickpea (Chana Dal))



- 1/2 cup red gram (Tur Dal)



- 1/4 cup Ivory lentils (Urad Dal)



- 1 stalk (or twig) of curry leaf (About 10-12 curry leaves)



- 3 whole dried red chilies (medium-sized)



- Olive oil



- Salt



- 1 pinch Hing (Asafoetida, optional)

PREPARATION:

Directions:



- Place rice and lentils in a colander and wash thoroughly in running water.

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In a large dish, soak the drained rice and lentils in water such that they are fully immersed. Soak for at least 3 hours. If you wish you could soak it overnight.

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Drain the water and set aside. Add the whole red chilies to the moist rice and lentil mix.

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Now, coarsely grind this mixture in a blender. Remember to add a little water as needed such that the batter blends easily. The batter must NOT be ground too fine but should be a bit grainy and thick. Transfer to a large bowl.

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Add salt, curry leaves, and hing to the mixture. Mix and stir thoroughly.

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You are now ready to make the adai.

Preparation

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Take Olive oil in a small bowl and keep ready by the stove. You will also need a large, flat nonstick pan, 1 sheet of paper towel, a ladle, a teaspoon, and a spatula.

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Make a wad of the paper towel and dip lightly into the bowl of olive oil. Gently rub the paper towel over the surface of the pan to grease. The correct amount of oil is such that it is barely visible on the pan. Now turn

on the heat/ flame at medium-high. Test if the pan is hot by lightly sprinkling water on the pan. It should sizzle.



Now, fill the ladle level with batter from the mixing bowl. Gently pour this batter onto the center of the pan. Begin to spread the batter in a widening circular motion starting from the center and moving out to form a thick layer(as thick as a pancake) roughly 6" diameter.



As soon as you have finished spreading the batter on the pan, using the spatula makes a small hole (no more than a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter) in the center of the circle.



Take a half teaspoon of oil and dribble around the diameter of the pancake. Add a drop of oil in the hole in the enter of the pan as well.



Wait for about 2 minutes. The upper surface will begin to look a little cohesive and it will no longer be soft or runny. Use the spatula and carefully flip the pancake. The bottom should be a golden or deep brown. Don't be anxious if the first one doesn't flip easily or if the bottom is not evenly colored. This is normal and will get better with the second pancake onwards as the pan gets evenly heated and your batter spreads uniformly on the pan.



Keeping stove on medium-high, allow to cook for a couple of minutes after flipping.



Turn over once again with the cooked side down. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon oil around the perimeter and a drop in the center as before.



You are almost done. In less than a minute turn it over one last time to see the surface is uniformly golden. The pancake will get crisp momentarily. The adais should be browned on both sides.



Serve them hot straight from the pan or make a batch and keep stack warm in a closed dish.



Before you start a new pancake, reduce the heat and use the paper towel wad to brush oil lightly as before. This will ensure the batter will spread evenly and the color will be a uniform brown.



Serve the Adai with side dishes like **coconut chutney**, **gunpowder chutney**, **sambar**, or even **Pico de Gallo**.